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THE DIRECTOR OF CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20505

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National Intelligence Officers

22 March 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

VIA: Deputy Director for National Foreign Assessment
Acting NIO/Warning

FROM: Robert C. Ames
National Intelligence Officer for Near East and
South Asia

SUBJECT: Monthly Warning Assessment: Near East and South Asia

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1. Reaction to Egyptian-Israeli Treaty. In reaction to the projected signing of the treaty between Israel and Egypt on 26 March, the other Arabs are likely to convene immediately a high-level session (like that held in Baghdad in November 1978) to discuss implementation of sanctions against Egypt. We expect that the economic and political sanctions agreed to earlier will be invoked, although in the important case of Saudi Arabia, perhaps with some restraint and delay that will cushion to a limited extent the serious economic blow to Egypt. Saudi Arabia, Jordan, and the few other relatively "moderate" Arab states are likely to make no more than a pro forma effort to temper the anti-Egyptian rhetoric and actions at a new conclave. Punitive political actions will be taken immediately; punitive economic actions will take more time to be implemented and become effective.

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2. Both the Saudis and the Jordanians face a basic problem in reconciling their desire for a special relationship with the US with their desire for Arab consensus. For the near term, they will emphasize consensus, even at a cost in their relations with the US. We expect the Saudis, for example, to be less cooperative with the US and to bow more quickly to OPEC consensus on matters of oil price and production levels.

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3. The signing of the treaty is likely also to lead to an increased number of terrorist acts and to civil disorders, primarily on the West Bank, the Gaza Strip, and in Lebanon. The likelihood has also increased, however, of international terrorist attacks on Egyptian, Israeli, and American officials and installations. Chances of the latter occurring will be raised still further at such symbolic stages as the exchange of ambassadors between Egypt and Israel.

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4. Afghanistan. The insurgency against the Taraki government continues to intensify, most notably with the serious clashes this month in the western Afghan city of Herat. The clashes in Herat not only represent a significant geographic spread of the problem (which generally has been limited to eastern Afghanistan), but raise the likelihood that important regional states, notably Iran and the USSR, may become more directly involved politically and/or militarily if the threat to Taraki becomes much more serious. Religious leaders in Iran have publicly endorsed the anti-regime activity in Afghanistan; the Soviets are expressing increased concern about foreign involvement

[REDACTED]

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5. Mauritania/Morocco/Algeria. Intelligence Community reporting suggests that a coup is likely in Mauritania in the coming months. This could lead to the accession to power of any regime ranging in policy orientation from pro-Morocco to pro-Algeria. Either extreme could worsen the already difficult Western Sahara problem. A pro-Moroccan regime might "restart" the war, where a conventional military victory may be impossible; a regime more sympathetic to the Polisario and Algeria could prompt a more rapid deterioration of Morocco's political position that could further undermine King Hassan's weakening hold on power.

[REDACTED]

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6. Developments in Areas of Continuing Concern.

a. Iran - where separatist movements by minority groups now pose an additional serious problem and raise the chances and opportunities for Soviet involvement. [REDACTED]

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b. Egypt/Libya - where the continued military buildup and patrolling on both sides and continued high political tensions have increased the chances of another clash. [REDACTED]

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c. Rapprochement between Syria and Iraq - which will be furthered by the signing of the Egyptian-Israeli treaty and may soon result in at least a superficial union of the two countries. [REDACTED]

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SUBJECT: Monthly Warning Assessment: Near East and South Asia

A/NIO/NESA: [REDACTED] (22 Mar 79)

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